

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Medical Services Division
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325
Bismarck, ND 58505

Questions related to Request for Proposal (RFP) Title: EXTERNAL QUALITY REVIEW/MEDICAID MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATION

RFP Number: 325-05-10-033
September 19, 2005

Question #1: Have previous results from *AltruCare*'s quality assessment and performance improvement activities been published? No. If so, what publications are accessible via the web and what are the corresponding URLs? Not applicable.

Question #2: Will this be North Dakota's first contract with an External Quality Review Organization (EQRO)? Yes. If not, who is the incumbent? Not applicable.

Question #3: What performance improvement projects (PIPs) and performance measures (PMs) was *AltruCare* contractually required to complete for calendar year 2004? The PIPs/PMs are not contractually defined and are left to the discretion of *AltruCare*. *AltruCare* works jointly with *Altru Health System* on the following PIPs/PMs (this is the most current information on PIPs/PMs as provided to the State by *AltruCare* although targets for these PMs were not provided):

Performance Improvement Project	Performance Measures
Acute Myocardial Infarction	Aspirin on arrival (% received) Aspirin on discharge (% prescribed) ACE inhibitor on discharge (% prescribed) Smoking cessation (% assessed) Beta blocker at discharge (% prescribed) Time to thrombolytic (mean in minutes) Time to PTCA (mean in minutes)
Breast Disease	Access satisfaction (% of patients surveyed who strongly agree or agree)
Congestive Heart Failure	Complete discharge instructions (% received) LV function assessment (% received) ACE inhibitor, on discharge (% received) Smoking cessation (% assessed)
Diabetes	No PMs documented
Pneumonia	Antibiotics within 4 hrs. (mean in minutes) Optimal antibiotic selection (% received – ICU) Optimal antibiotic selection (% received – non-ICU) Blood culture within 24 hrs. (% received)

	Pneumococcal vaccine assessment (% assessed) Smoking cessation (% of adults assessed) Oxygen assessment (% assessed)
Pre-Anesthesia Assessment	Number of cancellations/delays due to inadequate workup
Surgical Infection Prevention	No PMs documented
Tobacco Cessation	Percent of inpatients assessed

Are there changes to the PIPs and PMs for calendar year 2005? No.

Question #4: If the Contractor was to include §438.358(c)(5): *Conducting studies on quality that focus on a particular aspect of clinical or non-clinical services at a point in time*, in its proposal, a quality focus study that necessitates North Dakota Medicaid providers submit medical records for abstraction of data:

(a) Are providers contractually obligated to submit medical records to the State or its' Contractor for the performance of quality studies? No.

(b) If so, does the State reimburse providers for costs associated with copying and/or postage for submitting the requested medical records? Not applicable.

(c) If not, should the Contractor include this cost in its' proposal or would this cost be absorbed by the State? The State will not absorb the cost; it should be included in the proposal.

Question #5: Does the State intend that the Contractor also conduct the assessment of *AltruCare's* information systems (Appendix Z of the CMS protocols – *Information Systems Capabilities Assessment* [ISCA])? Yes.

Question #6: Has *AltruCare* completed or had completed the ISCA by any organization within the last two years? No.

Question #7: The RFP states, “the optional EQR activities will be dependent upon the EQRO’s recommendations and ability to conduct the activities within the available budget.” Since the proposal evaluation process assigns forty percent of the score to how much below the \$50,000 budget a vendor is, which is more important to DHS: being significantly under the budget or performing optional activities within the budget? Performing optional activities within the budget. If the latter, can the scoring weights be adjusted? No. The scoring system will provide for additional points to the agency providing more optional activities within or under the available budget.

Question #8: The RFP states, “the EQR must use information from a review, conducted within the previous three-year period, to determine the MCO's or PIHP's compliance....” Will the EQRO conduct this review (using *EQR Protocol for Determining Compliance with Medicaid Managed Care Proposed Regulations*) or use information from a review conducted by another entity? The only reviews conducted within the previous three-year period were conducted by the State through the Department of Human Services (DHS) Medicaid Utilization Management staff.

AltruCare submitted quarterly reports to Medicaid Utilization Management staff for this purpose. These reports will be made available to the Contractor.

Question #9: Based on CMS requirements, would the State consider the EQR only report on the annual requirements (PIPs/PMs only) for calendar year 2004 due to the short timeframe that is being allowed prior to the first draft report due date of March 1, 2006? Yes.

Question #10: What are the required PIPs and how many PIPs will be evaluated by the EQRO per year? The PIPs are described in Question #3. All PIPs will be evaluated by the EQRO each year.

Question #11: When was the last review of *AltruCare* related to contract performance and/or compliance? What did the review entail? See Question #8.

Question #12: Would DHS please provide a copy of the current contract between the State of North Dakota and the Noridian Mutual Insurance Company (*AltruCare*)? A copy of the contract is attached.

Question #13: Will the EQRO need to complete Activity 2, "Verify Study Findings" of the validation of PIPs EQR protocol? This is an optional activity within the mandatory protocol. Only mandatory activities are required for completion.

Question #14: Is *AltruCare* NCQA certified? No. If so, how will this change the degree of work in completing the activities (related to decreasing duplication)? Not applicable.

Question #15: Are the PMs completed by *AltruCare* or the State? AltruCare.

Question #16: Are the measures calculated according to HEDIS or other nationally standardized specifications? No.

Question #17: What are the measures that require medical record review? As determined by the Contractor.

Question #18: Does *AltruCare* use the CAHPS survey tools and methodology for completing their beneficiary satisfaction survey? No. If no, what do they use? AltruCare conducts an internally developed annual client satisfaction survey.

Question #19: Does the State have an estimated number of hours for provision of technical guidance? No.

Question #20: The annual EQR review involves assessing the degree to which *AltruCare* implemented prior recommendations. Are there any prior recommendations (from the State or another entity) that the EQR would need to consider when completing the validation of PIPs, validation of PMs and the compliance review? No.